cried out on Go<i *and* croodness. He himself could not help wondcrinjr at the- calm of his demeanour, and for a moment felt keenly the terrible pleasure of a double life.

It V.T^ a small party, £ot up rather in a hurry by Lady Xarb'-Toughj who was a very clever woman, with what Lord JK-nrY used to describe as the remains of really remarkable ugliryfs. She had proved an excellent wife to one of our most tedious ambassadors, and having buried her husband properly in a marble mausoleum, which she had herself designed, and irarrier? off her daughters to some rich, rather elderly men, she devoted herself now to the pleasures of French fiction, French cookery, and French *esprit* when she could get it.

Dorian was one of her special favourites, and she always told him that she was extremely glad she had not met him in early life. "I know, my dear, I should have fallen madly in love with you,'* she used to say, "and thrown my bonnet right over the mills for your sake. It is most fortunate that you were not thought of at the time. As it was, our bonnets were so unbecoming, and the mills were so occupied in trying to raise the wind, that I never had even a flirtation with anybody. However, that was all Narborough's fault. He^ was dreadfully short-sighted, and there is no pleasure in taking in a husband who never sees anything."

Her guests this evening were rather tedious. The fact was, as she explained to Dorian, behind a very shabby fan, one of her married daughters had come up quite suddenly to stay with her, and, to make matters worse, had actually brought her husband with her. "I think it is most unkind of her, my dear," she whispered. "Of course I go and stay with them every summer after I come from Homburg, but then an old woman like me must have fresh air sometime, and besides, I really wake them up. You don't know what an existence they lead down there. It is pure unadulterated country life. They get up early because they have so much to do, and go to bed early because they have so little to think about. There has not been a scandal in the neighbourhood since the time of jQueen Elizabeth, and consequently they all fall asleep after «dinner. You shan't sit next either of them. You shall sit by .rate, and amuse me."

Dorian murmured a graceful compliment, and looked round rthe room. Yes: it was certainly a tedious party. Two of the ;geople he had never seen before, and the others consisted of 'JSrnest Harrowden, one of those middle-aged

mediocrities so